

House
REPUBLICAN
Conference

FloorPrep

Legislative Digest

Tuesday, June 29, 1999

J.C. Watts, Jr.
Chairman
4th District, Oklahoma

*House Meets at 12:30 p.m. for Morning Hour and
2:00 p.m. for Legislative Business
(No Votes Before 2:00 p.m.)*

Anticipated Floor Action:

H.R. 2280—Veterans’ Benefits Improvement Act
H.J. Res. 34—Commending the 100th Anniversary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars
H.R. 1568—Veterans’ Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act
H.Con.Res. 94—Recognizing the Importance of Prayer
H.R. 2014—Prohibiting States from Imposing Discriminatory Commuter Taxes
H.Res. ____—Sense of Congress Condemning the Sacramento Synagogue Burnings



Bills Considered Under Suspension of the Rules

Floor Situation: The House is scheduled to consider the following six bills under suspension of the rules as its only order of business today. Each is debatable for 40 minutes, may not be amended, and requires a two-thirds majority vote for passage.

H.R. 2280—Veterans’ Benefits Improvement Act is an omnibus veterans bill that includes a number of previously-introduced bills as well as other measures designed to expand veterans’ benefits. Specifically, the bill:

- * authorizes a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for disability compensation and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) for survivors of certain disabled veterans;
- * adds bronchiolo-alveolar carcinoma, a form of lung cancer not associated with tobacco use, to the list of service-connected diseases;

- * authorizes DIC payments to surviving spouses of prisoners of war (POWs) who received complete disability at time of death, due to service-related injuries;
- * restores eligibility for certain medical care, education, and housing loans to surviving spouses who have remarried;
- * expands fundraising authorities and authorizes a \$65 million loan from the U.S. Treasury for the American Battle Monuments Commission to hasten construction of the World War II memorial;
- * directs the VA Secretary to obligate Advance Planning Funds in FY 2000 for four additional national cemeteries for veterans and to begin a comprehensive assessment of national cemeteries;
- * grants permanent eligibility for housing loans to National Reservists and Guards who served a minimum of six years;
- * authorizes \$100 million for the Labor Department to administer the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program;
- * makes retirement and survivor annuity programs for judges who serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims consistent with such programs for other federal judges;
- * extends VA's authority to better operate loan programs;
- * enhances the Veterans Benefits Administration's quality assurance programs; and
- * recognizes the 100th anniversary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The bill was introduced by Mr. Stump *et al.* and reported by the Veterans' Affairs Committee by voice vote on June 23, 1999. A CBO cost estimate was unavailable at press time.

H.J.Res 34 commemorates the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW). The resolution commends the veterans who belong to the VFW and expresses gratitude to them for their service to their fellow veterans and our nation. In addition, the resolution directs the president to issue a proclamation recognizing the VFW's anniversary and its contributions and observing the anniversary with proper ceremonies and activities. The VFW will celebrate its 100th anniversary by hosting a year-long traveling exhibit and holding a national convention in August 1999 in Kansas City, Missouri. The bill was introduced by Mr. Stump *et al.* and was reported by the Veterans' Affairs Committee by voice vote on June 23, 1999.

H.R. 1568—Veterans' Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development Act authorizes technical, financial, and procurement assistance to veteran-owned businesses by expanding the eligibility for certain small business assistance programs to include veterans, directing the Small Business Administration (SBA) to assist veteran-owned small businesses, and establishing additional institutions to provide veterans with small business assistance. Specifically, the bill (1) creates a National Veterans Business Development Center to establish a nationwide network through public and private sector initiatives to provide small business assistance to veterans, (2) strengthens the Office of Veterans Business Development to boost the SBA's support of veterans, (3) expands existing small business assistance programs, including the microloan program and the Delta Loan program, to include veterans, and (4) authorizes economic injury disaster assistance loans to reservists, National Guardsmen, and military retirees, who own small businesses but are called to active military service. The bill was introduced by Mr. Talent *et al.* and was reported by the Small Business Committee by voice vote on June 23, 1999. A CBO cost estimate was unavailable at press time.

H.Con.Res. 94 urges America's leaders to call for a national day of prayer and fasting before God. Furthermore, it recognizes the public need for repentance, reconciliation, and healing so that the nation will turn away from violence and cultural division. The resolution introduced by Mrs. Chenoweth *et al.* on May 4, 1999 and was not considered by any committee

H.R. 2014—Prohibiting States from Imposing Discriminatory Commuter Taxes prohibits any state from taxing the income of citizens of other states at a higher rate than they tax their own residents. The bill is a response to a taxation proposal affecting the New York City metropolitan area. On July 1, the state of New York will repeal the commuter tax for in-state commuters to the city but will continue to levy it against commuters from neighboring states such as New Jersey and Connecticut. The measure includes the District of Columbia in its definition of "state." The bill was introduced by Mr. Franks *et al.* and was reported by the Judiciary Committee by a vote of 17-7 on June 23, 1999.

H.Res. ____—Sense of Congress Condemning Sacramento Synagogue Burnings expresses the sense of Congress to (1) condemn the arsons that occurred in Sacramento, California, at Congregation B'Nai Israel, Congregation Beth Shalom, and Knesset Israel Torah Center on the evening of June 18, 1999; (2) reject such acts of intolerance and malice in American society and interpret such attacks on cultural and religious institutions as an attack on all Americans; (3) commit federal law personnel and resources to identify the individuals who committed the arsons and bring them to justice; (4) recognize and applaud Sacramento residents who have lent support and assistance to the members of the synagogues; and (5) call upon all Americans to categorically reject similar crimes of hate and intolerance. The resolution was introduced by Mr. Ose *et al.* and was not considered by a House committee.



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